Report of the Northern Economic Development Task Force

to

The Honourable Grant Devine

The Honourable Grant Hodgins

The Honourable Jack Wolfe

April 9, 1991

Joan Duncan, Chairperson
Louis Bear, Member
Jim Durocher, Member
Mel Hegland, Member
Lawrence Yew, Member

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Letter of Transmittal to the Premier

Joan Duncan

Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly

Member

April 9, 1991

Premier Grant Devine
Room 226
Legislative Building
Regina, Saskatchewan
S4S OB3

Dear Premier Devine:

RE: TASK FORCE REPORT

The Northern Economic Development Task Force is pleased to submit its report on actions required to enhance and diversify the northern economy.

The recommendations contained in the report are based on nine public and several informal meetings held throughout northern Saskatchewan and attended by over 435 people. As well, the Task Force received over 90 written and oral submissions and reviewed earlier studies such as the Cluff Lake Study, the Key Lake Study, The Consensus Saskatchewan Report and the report of the Northern Development Advisory Council.

Consistent with the mandate of the Task Force, we did not dwell on the already well documented social and economic issues of the North. Rather, we looked to the future and the types of initiatives and mechanisms required to ensure that northern stakeholders can fully participate in shaping a more prosperous future for themselves and their communities.

Demographic trends and unsatisfactory conditions in the North point to the imperative of taking constructive steps before problems become totally systemic and immune to solutions. Such steps cannot just tinker with the margins; rather, they must be **bold** and **creative**. Perhaps, most importantly, such steps must reflect the needs and aspirations of Northerners.

The members of the Task Force believe the recommendations contained in the report meet the challenge presented by our mandate. The recommendations reflect the inter-dependence of human resource development and economic development. While some recommendations focus on specific local initiatives, others establish a framework

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through which Northerners, in partnership with government and the private sector, can shape a brighter and more prosperous future.

The Task Force appreciates that its recommendations do carry a price tag, although much of what is being recommended is a realignment of existing programs in a manner which better meets needs of Northerners. Any costs associated with the recommendations must, however, be weighed against the financial and human costs of maintaining the status quo.

We would like to thank you for the opportunity to participate in this important initiative for northern Saskatchewan and indeed all of Saskatchewan. We look forward to receiving an early response from government as to the implementation of the recommendations.

Sincerely,

Joan Duncan, Chairperson

Louis Bear, Member

Jim Durocher, Member

Mel Hegland, Member

Lawrence Yew, Member

Background

THE TASK FORCE

On January 8, 1991, Indian and Metis Affairs Minister, Grant Hodgins, and Community Services Minister, Jack Wolfe, announced that a Northern Economic Development Task Force had been created to seek the views and ideas of Northern people regarding the best way to shape the future for economic development in northern Saskatchewan.

The five member Task Force team was chaired by Maple Creek Member of the Legislative Assembly and former Minister of the Northern Affairs Secretariat, Joan Duncan. Task Force members included Jim Durocher, President of the Metis Society; Lawrence Yew, Pinehouse Village Administrator and former Member of the Legislative Assembly; Mel Hegland, Mayor of La Ronge; and Louis Bear, Mayor of Sandy Bay.

The Task Force team was asked to meet with Northern people to hear their views on community and regional economic development, resource management, use of existing resource revenues, land ownership, land use and other economic initiatives, and to recommend a plan of action to government.

As well, the Task Force was asked to consider options for fully developing Batoche as a tourism and Metis cultural centre.

Public hearings were held in nine different northern communities including La Loche, Ile-a-la-Crosse, Meadow Lake, Pinehouse, La Ronge, Cumberland House, Creighton, Sandy Bay and Stony Rapids. Informal hearings were also held in Buffalo Narrows, Green Lake, La Ronge and Saskatoon.

- Everyone who lives, works or operates a business in the North is a stakeholder in its future. From the outset, Task Force members hoped that Northerners from all walks of life, including individuals, representatives of various interest groups and the business community, would participate in hearings.

- Task Force members defined themselves as an **Implementation** Task Force. Unlike numerous other groups which have held public hearings in the North, they were there not just to listen, but also to take action. The five members were already familiar with the problems and issues of the North, and wanted to hear specific recommendations they could take back to Regina for implementation.

- Task Force members each have a personal commitment to making a real difference in the North. They were all prepared to set aside partisan interests to come up with a set of recommendations that would serve the North as a whole - that would be bold and innovative and would pave the way for future development.

- Task Force members believed strongly that economic development and

human resource development must be closely linked. The people of the North must have opportunities to assume new challenges, to learn from their experiences and to benefit from their participation.

- Above all, they believed that northern communities and the families that live in them must be allowed to do things for themselves, make their own decisions and solve their own problems in their own way. From strong communities will grow strong regional organizations, a strong North, and ultimately a stronger province.

Northern people participated wholeheartedly in the hearings. Over 435 people attended the meetings. The Task Force received presentations, letters and briefs from over 90 people.

A broad cross-section of Northerners attended - trappers, fishermen, outfitters, businessmen and women, mayors and other elected officials, members of the Metis Society locals and Area Directors; band councillors, teachers, pilots, geologists, entrepreneurs and farmers; sawmill workers, miners, wild rice growers and construction workers; administrators, daycare workers, conservation officers and educators.

The Task Force was particularly impressed with the number of young people - the 'young entrepreneurs', economic development workers and students - who participated in the meetings. The Task Force hopes that through implementation of many of its recommendations, today's northern youth will have real opportunities to build a more prosperous tomorrow.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The northern half of Saskatchewan is a vast, sparsely populated region encompassing a 251,430 square kilometre area formerly known as the Northern Saskatchewan Administration District. The region is rich in resources - minerals, forests, wildlife, fish, water and natural beauty. Its history, culture and people are unique to the province. There are 37 communities scattered throughout the North with a total population of just over 30,000. Sixty-three percent are of Aboriginal descent. Over half of the population is under the age of 25.

The two oldest permanently settled communities in the province are in northern Saskatchewan - Cumberland House (1774) to the east, and Ile-a-la-Crosse (1776) to west. These communities were established on the waterways that were our earliest transportation routes.

The economy of the North was flourishing long before settlement of the southern prairies began. The fur trade provided a livelihood for people of the North for centuries. Spin-off activity associated with the fur trade industry included boat building, guiding, provisioning the trading posts, and (later) freighting food and supplies to the North from the south.

Commercial fishing became a prominent economic activity in the early 1900's, followed by mining and hydroelectric power development. Forest resources have also played a significant role in the economic development of the North. Abundant wildlife, fish and products of the forest sustained families and their traditional nomadic lifestyles for generations.

The first inhabitants of the North were the Dene who dominated the fur trade in the Athabasca region and the Cree who dominated the fur trade along the Churchill and Saskatchewan River systems.

The early Metis came from Manitoba to what is now the Green Lake and Ile-a-la-Crosse areas. Euro-Canadians began to move into the North in significant numbers during the depression years of the 1930's. Mining, logging and the development of hydroelectric power became prominent activities. Non-Aboriginal populations in La Ronge, Creighton and Uranium City grew as a result of early mining activity.

Government was introduced to the North relatively recently. Following a Royal Commission in 1944, the first hunting and fishing regulations were introduced and the Saskatchewan Fish Board, Saskatchewan Timber Board, Saskatchewan Forest Products Corporation, and Fur Marketing Services were established. By 1948, with the passing of the Northern Saskatchewan Administration Act, Department of Natural Resources staff in addition to other duties, were responsible for collecting property and education taxes and administering a northern housing program.

The first social aid programs were introduced in 1950 and were also delivered by the Department of Natural Resources staff. Northern people were encouraged to live in communities to receive schooling, health care and the benefits of social assistance programs.

In 1972, the Department of Northern Saskatchewan was formed and money was poured into the development of community infrastructure and 'roads to resources'. Much of the development was done by outsiders and benefits to Aboriginal people were largely seasonal or short-lived.

As traditional industries have gradually been replaced by modern mining, forestry and tourism activities, Aboriginal populations have played a less and less significant role in the development of the northern economy. The establishment of predominantly Aboriginal settlements, erosion of traditional lifestyles and culture, regulation of traditional industries, and introduction of the welfare system has had a profound effect on the Aboriginal people in the North.

These costs are by no means unique to La Loche. Similar expenditure patterns occur in virtually all northern communities where unemployment levels exceed 60%. In 1990, the total cost of social assistance and unemployment insurance alone exceeded $30 million.

The problem is not going to go away without radical changes to the system.

> ***"In many instances the traditional economic pursuits were directly replaced by government sponsored welfare programs. Gradually, the people of the North became dependent on government for support. This was a significant departure from the previously independent lifestyles of most Aboriginal Northerners."***
> (Province of Saskatchewan, Northern Education Task Force Report to the Minister of Education, Summary of Findings, November 15, 1989)

The creation of communities with 60% - 95% unemployment, which are largely dependent on government for survival, has had high social, economic and cultural costs for once-independent, self sufficient people.

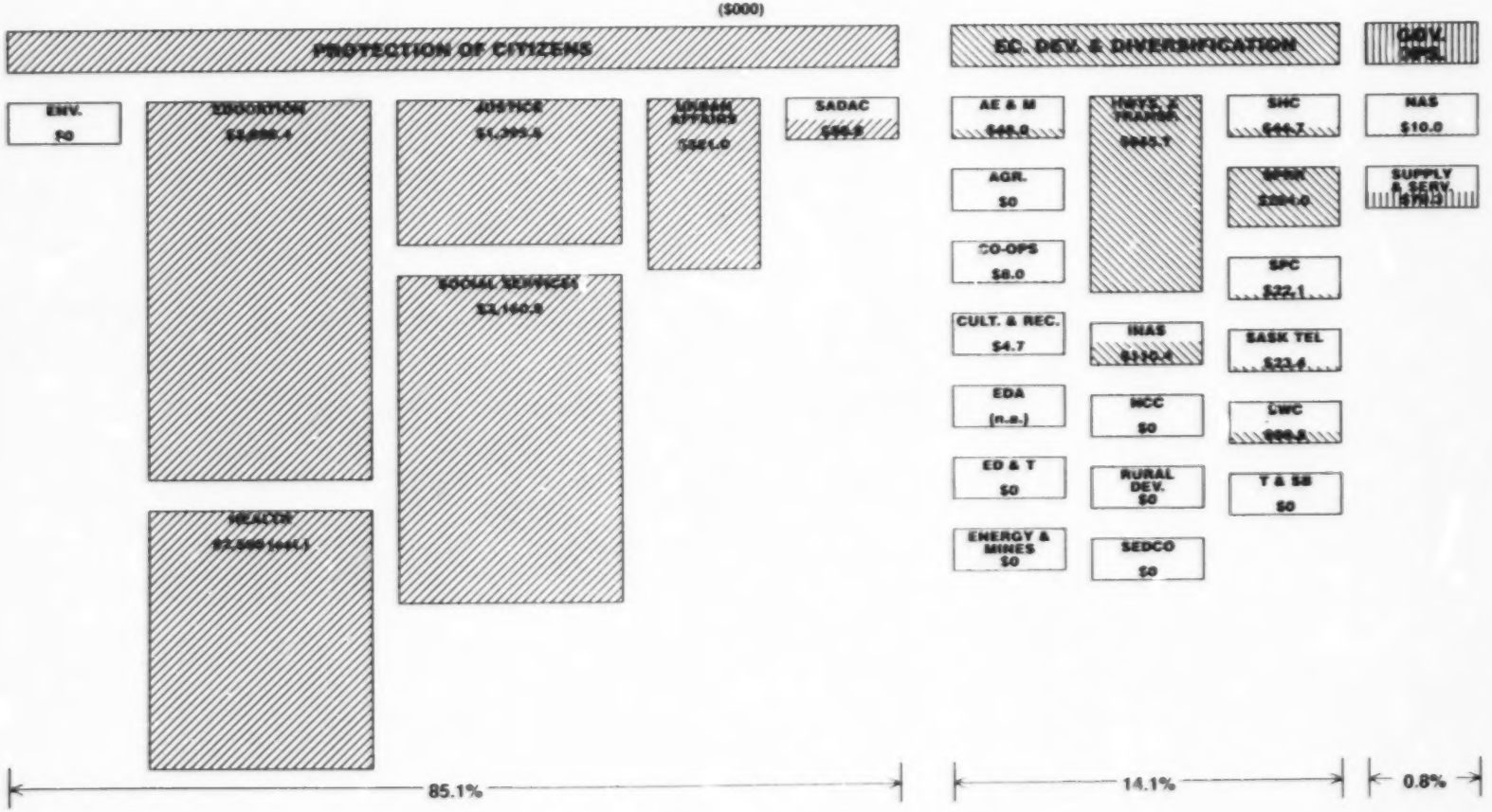
Not only have the costs been high for Northerners, they have also been high for the province as a whole in terms of lost contributions to the provincial economy and our increasing burden of debt.

A study done in 1985-86 in the Northern Village of La Loche, with a population of 1,832 people, indicated that the provincial government had spent $13.27 million in one fiscal year. Expenditures were predominantly in the areas of Social Services, Education, Justice and Health. Less than 15% of these funds was spent on economic development, diversification and infrastructure. (See Figure 1 on page 7)

FIGURE 1

GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN
REPORTED EXPENDITURES BY DEPARTMENT
IN LA LOCHE (1985-86)

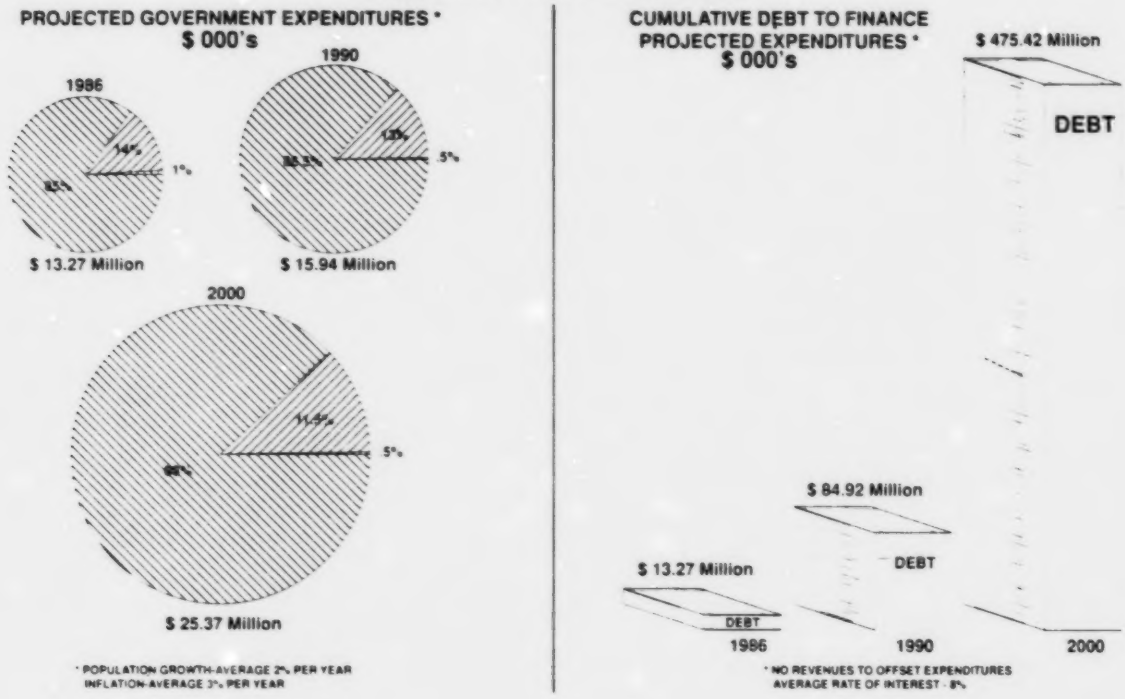
($000)



An analysis of the results of these large injections of government funds through safety net and protection programs, clearly demonstrates that a destructive trap has been created which serves to feed, perpetuate and increase dependency on the welfare state.

If we consider that these expenditures are essentially unproductive and that they contribute to the province's accumulated deficit, it is possible to project a total cumulative debt of $475 million by the year 2000 for the provision of services that by-and-large maintain the status quo.

COMMUNITY OF LA LOCHE



These estimates have taken into account a very modest rate of population growth of 2%. The real growth rate of northern Aboriginal communities is averaging 4.2% per annum. By the year 2000, it is estimated that the population in northern Saskatchewan will exceed 50,000. The current trend of limited out-migration will seriously exacerbate existing social and economic problems, as well as costs, if nothing is done.

> ***"The definition of insanity is doing the same thing in the same way over and over again, and expecting different results"***
> - Chris LaFontaine, Executive Director, Gabriel Dumont Institute.

Repeatedly, the Task Force heard northern people condemn the welfare system and the state of dependency that had been created.

> ***"We do not prefer maintaining our northern population artificially through welfare and other social support mechanisms or by subsidizing traditional but grossly***

uneconomic activities ... this cannot seriously be regarded as a long-term solution to regional and provincial development problems"
- Roy Cheecham, Executive Director, Northwest Saskatchewan Municipalities Association presenting Northern Economic Development Strategy, N.W.S.M.A. Proposal to Northern Economic Task Force

Other historical factors which have contributed to the significant underdevelopment of the North, can best be described by drawing comparisons with the south...

The decline of the fur trade in the 1800's overlapped with the settling of the prairies. In relatively short order agricultural settlement and development of southern Saskatchewan outpaced anything that had existed in the North. Government supported early economic development in the south in a variety of ways - supplying cheap freehold land, identifying development opportunities, undertaking research and development, and providing both internal and export-related transportation infrastructure.

In the south, emphasis was also placed on the building of local governance capabilities. The first rural municipalities and towns were established in 1883. By 1948, eight cities, 48 towns, 380 villages and 269 rural municipalities had been established. Local governments were used to collect taxes and deliver municipal services. Regional responsibilities included road construction and maintenance, civil defence activities, construction of hospitals and administration of hospital services, and provision of senior government-funded services to residents.

Southern Saskatchewan enjoys the ability to tax rural land, to influence development through zoning bylaws and to participate to a greater degree in delivering certain senior government services.

By way of contrast, in northern Saskatchewan:

- modern municipal government structures (hamlets, settlements, villages and towns) were not introduced to most of the North until 1983, under The Northern Municipalities Act. No ability exists for regional governance outside community boundaries.
- virtually all northern land is Crown owned, with limited opportunities to obtain freehold title or to establish market driven land values.
- the primary piece of legislation governing northern land use is The Forest Act, with limited ability to deal effectively with other land and resource uses.
- economic infrastructure investment is lacking. The four major road routes were built primarily for (and in some cases by) the mining industry. The same can be said for electricity generation and distribution systems. No rail lines or natural gas distribution systems exist anywhere in northern Saskatchewan. Supports for development including financial institutions, centres of higher learning, and research and development facilities are minimal to non-existent.

THE VISION

Despite its history of underdevelopment and the seemingly insurmountable odds associated with welfare dependency, Northerners have a powerful and optimistic vision of the future... one which was expressed consistently and passionately to the Task Force.

Their vision stems from their love of the land and its resources, from their pride in their history and their unique way of life and from their desire to be fully contributing participants in the modern economy.

They have a vision that will require bold and creative changes to structures and the building of new partnerships with industry and government.

They have a vision that involves increased local ownership, control and decision making, and the blending of cultures and ideas. They have a vision that preserves their traditions while building a new and better future for their children.

Task Force members believe that the North holds great potential for the future, that many opportunities exist that will allow Northerners to achieve their vision.

It is sincerely hoped that the implementation of Task Force recommendations will provide Northerners with a basis for taking the first steps in a new direction.

Northern Opportunities for Development

NORTHERN REALITIES

Many people have, for many years, taken the view that northern realities restrict opportunities for development.

Everyone is familiar with the long list of factors used to explain the lack of development in the North:

- remoteness and poor accessibility
- high transportation and energy costs
- too small a population
- a relatively inexperienced and untrained labour force
- lack of local capital and financial institutions
- lack of access to, and ability to use land and its resources
- lack of available community and regional services

and so the list goes on...

In the past, the simple solution was to call on government to respond to all of these issues with more money and more programs... to build the roads, to subsidize power and transportation costs, to establish businesses...

But such an approach no longer works.

- Northerners, themselves, do not want, or expect, government to do it all for them.
- Senior governments, alone, do not have the financial flexibility to stimulate economic development in a region or within sectors of the economy.
- Without an effective and growing partnership of the people, the private sector, and the public sector, each playing the roles to which it is suited, development comes slowly, if at all! This need for productive and mutually beneficial partnerships is the single most important reality underpinning all future efforts to grow and to develop.
- The North is inextricably linked to a global market place. Appropriate responses to world, national and provincial events and trends are absolutely essential for the successful establishment and development of long-term, sustainable, economic growth in the North.

MAJOR WORLD TRENDS

- change occurring with increasing speed
- rapid evolution of continental trading blocks
- diminishing trade/tariff barriers both globally and within trading blocks
- significant industrial/manufacturing rationalization and relocation
- enormous amounts of investment funding seeking 'safe investment' environments
- increasing problems with debt repayment/rescheduling for many nations
- increasingly rapid information technology advances, especially in computerization and communications fields
- increasing pressures to protect/preserve the environment and heritage

MAJOR CANADIAN TRENDS

- very low natural population growth rates
- increasing debt load restricting public sector programs
- increasing downloading of federal costs to provincial governments
- declining employment in many primary resource and manufacturing industries
- increasing employment in service sector
- continued strong emphasis on development/export of new technologies
- sustained emphasis on value-added processing of products for export
- increasing emphasis on creating new employment through entrepreneurialism and development of small businesses, rather than through massive public investment in public works and mega-projects

MAJOR SASKATCHEWAN TRENDS

- very low natural population growth rates
- growing debt burden restricting government's ability to stimulate the economy
- increasing farm productivity but declining net farm incomes
- strong emphasis on diversifying the economy
- continued strong emphasis on development/export of new technologies involving communications, agricultural biotechnologies and equipment, computerization
- increasing efforts to redirect provincial savings toward provincial investment opportunities
- increasing emphasis on improving transportation links to United States markets
- increasing emphasis on tourism as new 'growth sector'
- renewed focus on removing barriers to facilitate development in the North
- increasing opportunities to market 'green' services and products
- increasing focus on moving decision-making to the people and involving stakeholders

Within the context of all these major trends, northern Saskatchewan residents, together with governments and the private sector, have to decide how best they can develop the North.

The traditional model of economic development says only three things are really needed in order to successfully develop: land... labour... and capital. Today, however, there are three other key ingredients essential to achieving development: ideas... positive attitudes... and energy.

When we look at the North today, we see a vast area of land and water, with all its resources, populated with growing numbers of younger people who have, for the most part, new ideas, positive attitudes and outlooks, and abundant energy to be a part of changes that can lead to greater development of the North.

In contrast to how the potential for development of the North would have been measured only some 20 years ago - against the land, labour and capital theory - northern Saskatchewan today has much more potential for development.

When one thinks of northern Saskatchewan, it is hard **not** to think of the opportunities that exist for development in the months and years to come...

THE NORTHERN OPPORTUNITIES ENVIRONMENT

> ***Economic development should create wealth and if this can be sustainable development, so much the better. Here we have fisheries, fur, forests, tourism, soil, water and human resources.***
> - Torance Tornquist, Manager Northern Village of Sandy Bay

Development is not an end in itself - it is a never-ending process of improving existing opportunities and exploring new ones. Applications of human and physical resources are continually adjusted to produce and deliver products and services to ever-changing markets, whether at home or halfway around the world.

And just as markets constantly change, so too do the needs for certain physical resources and the human skills to develop and process them. This is particularly true because of the rapid technological changes that are taking place.

Northerners are very familiar with these basic truths about economic development. They have watched their North and its economy continually evolve. From an original emphasis on trapping, commercial fishing, gathering and small-scale forestry operations, the North now represents a more diversified modern economy that includes gold, uranium and other mining (including exploration for diamonds), tourism, wild rice production, and aquaculture.

But where does the North stand now, in 1991, in terms of its levels of economic development and what major changes, in the past eight to nine years, have brought it to this point?

The following reflects on some of the major changes and significant events in the North's economy, sector by sector, during the past eight years and suggests opportunities for further development in the years to come.

NORTHERN SASKATCHEWAN SECTORIAL TRENDS AND FUTURE OUTLOOKS

Since the Early '80s	For 1991 and Beyond
TRADITIONAL INDUSTRIES	
Trapping	
• tremendous drop in revenues from $2-$3.7 million annually (1980-88) to $920,000 (1989-90)	• fewer commercially viable producers
• fewer participants (from over 3000 in 1980-81 to 2300 in 1990-91)	• highly erratic markets (receipts for 1990-91 could drop to $5-$600,000 in 1990-91)
• strong pressure on markets from environmental and anti-fur lobby groups	• even fewer participants but industry continues for its lifestyle/cultural values
• large oversupply of wild fur in late 1980's	• sustained anti-fur campaigns
• competition from ranched fur industry	
Commercial Fishing	
• no growth in local processing activities	• sustained strong competition from all sources
• slight decline in numbers of participants but no net increase in harvests	• no increases in available quotas
• no overall increases in quotas	• some opportunities for greater local value-added processing of rough fish, especially for ethnic markets
• increasing competition from local sports fisheries and from commercial aquaculture and Great Lakes' operations	• current resource base continues to be harvested at maximum sustainable levels
• strengthening of local direct sales opportunities	• continued pressure for restocking lakes with native species
Gathering Activities	
• general decline in subsistence gathering	• moderately strong potential for growth in 'wild products of the forest' harvesting and processing, provided there is effective organization, strong product development, and aggressive marketing by the industry
• increased attention focused on, and significant government assistance provided to, small-scale commercial processing/marketing of wild fruits, mushrooms, herbs and wild plants	
Subsistence Agriculture	
• continued decline in local gardening and raising of livestock for local consumption	• return to increased numbers of community gardens producing for subsistence use and local sales, facilitated through expansion of community boundaries
• increased pressure for agricultural land leases	

Since the Early '80s	For 1991 and Beyond
Small-Scale Forestry	
• decline in numbers of subsistence and semi-commercial operations	• increased opportunities for local, small-scale operations, using new portable precision milling technologies, to produce for local/regional markets (community construction, tourism sector, mining industry, etc.)
• pressure to establish local cutting rights and reintroduce transportation subsidies and other government assistance programs	

PRINCIPAL INDUSTRIES

Mining	
• 3 new uranium mines and 2 new gold mines; closure of Uranium City	• continued exploration activity and development of other metals/ minerals (nine new gold mines being investigated)
• substantial increase in exploration activities	• by 1995, total mining workforce projected to be 2400; industry proposes 50% be Northerners with $30 million annual wages
• Mineral Surface Leases used to facilitate co-operative approach to realizing economic and employment benefits for Northerners	• greatest opportunities to increase Northerners' employment in mines is in the trades, technical and supervisory positions
• significant industry and senior government support for exploration and mine operations' training ($3 million between 1985-90 and $1 million in 1990-91); over 830 Northerners trained, to date	• expansion of program to train northern Aboriginals as 'environmental monitoring technicians' at mines
• establishment of scholarship programs for mine employees' dependents	• continued high demand in Saskatchewan and further afield for graduates of mine training programs
• many newly established northern Aboriginal businesses (sole proprietorships/partnerships) providing industry supplies and services (transportation, camp operations, security services, etc.)	• sustained demand for personnel for continuing exploration activity
• currently, 35% of 800 mine employees and 300 contract employees are Northerners who gross $11 million in wages annually.	• significant potential for Northerners to capture increased share of businesses/services associated with mining
Forestry	
• sale of PAPCO to Weyerhaeuser and establishment of new F.M.L.A. (1986)	• significant opportunities for qualified Northerners, alone or in partnership, to offer wider range of contracted services to forestry majors, especially in silvicultural activities and harvesting operations
• agreement to construct Millar-Western pulp mill and establishment of new NorSask F.M.L.A. (1988)	• establishment of second Forest Resource Development Agreement will increase silvicultural employment and diversification opportunities further
• new F.M.L.A.'s significantly increase industry responsibilities for reforestation and community involvements	• replanting efforts will increase 40% (to 14 million seedlings/year) in 5 years

Since the Early '80s	For 1991 and Beyond
Forestry (continued)	
• closure of Simpson Timber Ltd. (1989)	• potential for West Side communities and bands to create over 100 new and direct permanent jobs by 1995, by providing contracted services within NorSask F.M.L.A.
• Weyerhaeuser adds fine paper mill and sheeter (1990), creating value-added products and new jobs	• considerable scope for greater third party utilization of uncommitted resources within F.M.L.A. core and reserve supply areas
• industry, M.L.T.C. and the N.W.S.M.A. begin negotiations re: West Side bands and communities providing comprehensive harvesting and silvicultural services within NorSask F.M.L.A. (1990)	• very strong emphasis on increasing efficiencies of resource utilizations, value added processing of existing product lines, and development of new products to satisfy niche markets
• Third party reserve fibre allocation (170,000 m³/yr) within NorSask F.M.L.A. largely unutilized	• sustained effort to stabilize East Side forestry operations through establishment of a major forest user
• increased replanting efforts	
• significant fire losses and costs	
• fierce competition within pulp and traditional dimensional lumber markets (many dimensional lumber producers now selling below cost)	
Tourism	
• establishment of Saskatchewan's first wilderness park and Canadian Heritage Park on the Clearwater (1986)	• stable demand for traditional, consumptive tourism and recreational experiences (hunting and fishing)
• Lac La Ronge Provincial Park boundary expansion (1986)	• increasing demand for non-traditional, non-consumptive tourism and recreational activities (wilderness tours, wildlife appreciation, heritage/culture experiences)
• designation of Athabasca sand dunes, a world class biological site as a Parkland Reserve (1988)	• northern Saskatchewan is still a tourism frontier with significant development potential that will be increasingly realized in the 1990's
• increasing numbers of northern outfitters	• increased attention focused on marketing activity, attracting capital investment for facilities and improved access (including better air transportation access to United States markets), and increased hospitality training
• moderate increase in levels of capitalization of lodge facilities	• increased attention focused on identifying new markets, attracting capital investment for facilities, improving access (including better linkages to United States markets) and hospitality training
• commencement of work on northern Saskatchewan's first major four seasons tourist destination facility - Eagle Point Resort at La Ronge (1989)	
• establishment of Heritage North Coordinating Committee Inc. (1989)	
• first Heritage Tourism Conference (1990)	
• strong competition for fisheries allocations	
• slight drop in park attendance attributed, primarily, to declining disposable incomes	

Since the Early '80s	For 1991 and Beyond

OTHER INDUSTRIES

Energy Production and Distribution

- commissioning of Athabasca - Points North and Wollaston Lake transmission lines (1989) and commencement of construction of Island Falls - Points North transmission line (1990)
- widespread conversions in communities and at mines from diesel electric to hydroelectric power source
- significant employment opportunities for Northerners on government/mining industry cost-shared transmission line construction projects
- SPC commitment to repair Island Falls 'A' Dam (1990) to increase public safety and reduce environmental risks
- SPC commitment to purchase privately generated power from biomass source (1990)
- oil exploration in the Primrose Air Weapons Range
- direct revenue sharing from energy production in the North introduced through establishment of SaskPower Northern Enterprise Fund (1980)

- completion of Island Falls to Points North transmission line
- repairs to or reconstruction of the 'A' Dam at Island Falls
- potentially increased generating capacity at Island Falls and extension of transmission line to Nipawin
- significant opportunities for generation of additional hydroelectric power in the North, as well as development of new power sources (CANDU 300, biomass-based, cogeneration)
- such opportunities must be weighed by Northerners within the context of the construction/operations opportunities created, the additional resource revenues generated, the increased industrial and/or manufacturing developments that new power supplies could support the existing resource development activities and future opportunities that would be displaced by such developments and the related environmental costs of such developments

Transportation

- significant improvements to Highway 2 to La Ronge (1984-89)
- establishment of Points North to provide improved freight services to Athabasca region communities and northern mines (1986)
- completion of new air terminal facilities at La Ronge (1988)
- over $2.2 million invested to help La Loche and area residents construct the Saskatchewan portion of the La Loche-Fort MacMurray Road (1988-91)

- continued pressure to upgrade highways
- potential construction of the Cigar Lake road
- establishment of all-weather road access into the Athabasca region
- completion of the La Loche-Fort McMurray road to the Alberta border
- new road construction into new regions to open up areas to new resource developments and to new markets, while reducing cost of services to consumers

Since the Early '80s	For 1991 and Beyond
Transportation (continued)	
• support for the Athabasca A.T.V. Pilot Project (1990)	
• resurfacing, lighting and other improvements to many community airstrips (Ile-a-la-Crosse, Cumberland House, Wollaston, Stony Rapids and others)	
• increased provision of air services (chartered and scheduled) throughout the North, primarily because of increased mining and tourism industry activity	
• new mining and forest industry roads open up areas to other development potentials	
Commercial Agriculture	
• transfer of government farms to local community control:	• significant opportunities for community farms to produce for farm gate, local community and regional sales of fresh produce, poultry, eggs and meats
- 10,400 acre Cumberland House Farm and assets ($2.7 million) to Cumberland House Development Corp. (1989)	• continued development, promotion and marketing of high grade wild rice, plus value-added processing of products
- Ile-a-la-Crosse 1,850 acre farm plus $151,000 to Ile a la Crosse Development Corporation (1990)	• significant growth potential for greater export sales of high value unprocessed and processed 'wild products of the forest', provided resource volumes are confirmed
- 9,000 acre Central Farm plus $587,000 in cash and assets to Green Lake Trust (1990)	• additional development potential remains in the aquaculture industry, provided key areas of product standardization and quality and guaranteed delivery are effectively addressed
• significant growth of wild rice industry, including over $1 million invested in central processing facility at La Ronge	• mining industry's commitment to increased purchase of goods and services from northern suppliers opens new opportunities for sales and services
• initial development and refinement of product lines and exploration of domestic/export markets for natural products of the forest	
• initial development of aquaculture industry (rainbow trout) to enable diversification from commercial fishing	
• establishment of Ile-a-la-Crosse market gardening initiative with growing sales to northern mines (1989)	
• limited exploration of wild game ranching (elk)	

Since the Early '80s	For 1991 and Beyond
Financial Services	
• rationalization of Northern Revolving Loan Fund operations (1982-83) and increase in operating line	• guaranteed availability of SaskPower Northern Enterprise Fund until 1998; subject to renewal if commitment made to additional energy generation in the North and with greater revenues available for investment
• provision of Northern Economic Development Sub-Agreement support to wide range of northern economic development committees/ associations/corporations and entrepreneurs (1984-89)	• continued growth and roles for communities/ regions in shaping, organizing and delivering financial services
• 1989 establishment of the SaskPower Northern Enterprise Fund with first year performance record of $500,000 in grants (95) and $1.1 million in loan guarantees (126)	• increased availability of 'one stop shopping' for financial services
• increasing numbers of Small Business Loans Associations (1990), for micro-enterprises at the community level	• increasing numbers of small businesses and micro-enterprises
• establishment of Indian Equity Development Fund	
• establishment of Visions North and Beaver River Community Futures Committees	
• chartering of the Northwest Credit Union, Buffalo Narrows (1990)	
Local Government	
• creation of Saskatchewan Assoc. of Northern Communities (S.A.N.C.) as a result of S.U.M.A.'s lack of response to northern municipal concerns (late 1970's-early 1980's)	• amendment to Northern Municipalities Act (1983) to allow northern municipalities to participate directly, through share ownership, in municipal economic development corporations
• Northern Municipalities Act (1983) provided increased authorities and greater autonomy for northern towns, villages, hamlets and settlements	• continued growth of N.R.S.T.A.'s 'surplus account' due to increased mining activity revenues, primarily, as well as revenues from any increases in northern land sales
• initiation through N.R.S.T.A., in 1983 of first two 5-year capital grants programs ($10.0 million in grants to date)	• continued evolution of regional community organizations having stronger inputs into regional policy, program delivery and project development decisions
• demise of government-established Northern Municipal Council (1984) primarily due to its ambiguous mandate, lack of clear legislative authorities and insufficient funding	• continued strengthening of contact, communications and co-operation amongst northern communities, their regional associations, and northern industries.

Since the Early '80s	For 1991 and Beyond
Local Government (continued)	
• establishment of regional organizations of communities (N.W.S.M.A., 1988 and N.E.M.A., 1989) to work together to foster regional policy positions and closer working relationships and communications with senior governments and industry	• increased membership in northern development corporations actively supporting and/or leading business/commercial ventures supplying products and services to communities and northern industry
Public Sector	
• dismantling of Department of Northern Saskatchewan functions to individual line departments (1982-1983)	• sustained emphasis on 'training-to-job' programs, particularly for youth and unemployed
• increasing emphasis on northern education and training programming, including establishment of Northlands Career College and focus on delivery in outlying centres: - ABE and lifeskills training - industry co-operation in many technical training initiatives	• increased focus on the provision of entrepreneurial training
• Business Resource Centres established in Buffalo Narrows, La Ronge and Creighton (1983-85) and later centralized in La Ronge (1989)	• continued increase in the range of support programs available to assist existing and new entrepreneurs to start or to expand small businesses
• commitment to transfer unoccupied Crown lands within northern municipal boundaries (1988)	• increased emphasis on local/regional level, 'grass roots' economic development planning and delivery of projects
• establishment of S.E.D.P./SaskWorks program in 1984 as a bridging mechanism, to help social assistance recipients gain valuable training and employment experiences (over $14 million spent to create 2500 jobs in northern communities - 1984-90)	• increased rate of transfer of unoccupied Crown lands within communities to better support local communities' efforts to establish and attract new business
• creation of Northern Development Advisory Council (1985-88) to gather, distil and convey Northerners' concerns and ideas on northern development needs to provincial government (disbanded upon establishment of stronger direct communications between Northerners and government, especially through formation of regional municipal associations)	• increased pressure for training institutions and financial support systems to respond to specific community/regional needs

Since The Early '80s	For 1991 and Beyond
Construction	
• significant increase in number of Northerners with training and experience in construction trades, but many journeymen still brought in from the south	• sustained emphasis on training in apprenticeable trades
• valuable trades' skills and equipment operations experience gained through mining industry jobs and related training	• known and potential major capital projects include: - La Ronge hospital construction - strip mall in Buffalo Narrows - La Loche to Fort McMurray Road - new hospital on the West Side - construction of health clinic in Athabasca Region - Cigar Lake road - all-weather road to Athabasca region - expansion of Dene High in La Loche - expansion of Black Lake School
• several communities fostered local contractors to deliver as many local projects as possible	• potential for increased local delivery and adminstration of new housing through C.M.H.C., F.S.I.N., M.S.S. negotiations
• Methy Construction and Maintenance Corp., La Loche, established (1985) to deliver new and to maintain existing housing stock, and to undertake (1987) property development	• potential for increased local/regional responsibility for management/administration of existing housing stock, through participation in fieldworker training, self-help repair, property management and mortgage administration training programs
• increased co-operation amongst municipalities, local contractors/companies and provincial agencies in planning delivery of local housing renovations/maintenance and public works, so as to maximize local business and employment opportunities	• continued development of community infrastructure
• significant opportunities for northern contractors associated with new transmission line projects and 'A' dam repairs	• greater emphasis on establishing central clearing houses for information on upcoming contract opportunities
• involvement of local contractors in delivery of major capital projects hindered by bonding requirements and lack of contract splitting	• increasingly important role played by Norsask Native Outreach as a community-based employment organization
	• continued pressure to address long standing housing, bonding, and contract splitting issues
Communications	
• establishment of northern-focused radio station (Missinippi Broadcasting)	• increased applications of advanced communications and information technologies, particularly in the business and education fields
• continued efforts to develop an Aboriginal press in the North (ie. New Breed, SipyNorth)	• development of programming through Saskatchewan Communications Network will add to the programs available in the North
• still limited numbers of media outlets in the North	• creation of an independently owned and operated radio station (Missinippi Broadcasting)
• rapid growth in the number of small, municipally-supported/controlled radio stations	
• consistently strong demand for more Aboriginal communications' (radio and written) outlets	

Since The Early '80s

Communications (continued)

- great increase in the number of Northerners trained in the communications field
- recent federal budget cut-backs further reduced Secretary of State support for Aboriginal communications initiatives
- consistent and strong concerns about poor quality or outright lack of CBC TV programming available in the North
- increased availability of telephone service throughout the North

Critical Northern Development Themes

(What we heard)

Although many varied presentations and submissions were received by the Task Force there was a high degree of consistency to their underlying themes.

The following themes represent the views most consistently expressed by Northerners These themes do not attempt to cover everything the Task Force heard, but represent the common ground that Northerners identified as prerequisites for economic development.

1. The need to reverse the current and growing trend toward "welfare dependence" by supporting the desire of Northerners to participate in economic development.

2. The opportunity to increase Northerners' control and influence in such areas as land use, land ownership and resource management.

3. The need for Northerners to share, more visibly and more substantially in resource development revenues.

4. The opportunity for Northerners to work in closer co-operation and partnership with the private sector and other levels of government to further develop and diversify the northern economy.

5. The recognition that traditional industries (trapping, fishing and gathering) must remain as important elements of the northern lifestyle and economy, and that special government efforts are required to help protect and diversify these industries.

6. The need for governments to reduce excessive regulations and red tape and to better co-ordinate their programs.

7. The need to ensure that information regarding programs and business opportunities is widely available throughout the North.

8. The need for increased investment in community infrastructure to enhance the quality of life in the North and to ensure attractive and stable sites for further private investment.

9. The need to better integrate human resource development with economic and business development in the North.

10. The need to support both human resource development and economic development among the Metis people of Saskatchewan.

1. WELFARE DEPENDENCE

> ***"We don't want welfare, we want to stand on our own two feet"***
> - Guy Bouvier, Western Region 1 Area Director, Metis Society of Saskatchewan, Meadow Lake

> ***"Existing programs and efforts taken by the provincial and federal governments have been generally unsuccessful. Although all interested parties have been sincere in offering a variety of options over the years... social problems still exist."***
> - Greg Ross, Mayor of Pinehouse

> ***"Politicians and members of the public alike are starting to realize that excluding us from economic opportunities is creating major costs for all of society... not just for our people."***
> - Max Morin, Northern Region 3 Area Director, Metis Society of Saskatchewan, Ile-a-la-Crosse

Too many Northerners are forced to rely on welfare because no viable employment exists. Northerners worry that welfare is becoming a fact of life, ingrained in their culture, especially for the youth.

Presenters reasoned that, through enhanced economic development, with substantive participation and input from Northerners, the costs to government for welfare would be significantly reduced or the rate of increase slowed, considerably.

While reluctantly admitting the absolute need for welfare in the North, Northerners also recognize the unproductive nature of such support. They widely believe that greater government support for economic development is an investment in reduced welfare, health and justice costs.

2. NORTHERN CONTROL AND INFLUENCE

"I recommend that this process of consultation continue to establish long term strategies developed by northern people in consultation with their government"
- Torance Tornquist, Manager, Northern Village of Sandy Bay

"We as northerners are prepared and willing to assist in this endeavour (diversifying the economy) provided we are given the opportunity to participate in determining the pace, scale and direction of our contribution'
- Roy Cheecham, Executive Director, Northwest Saskatchewan Municipalities Association

"The NRSTA is currently inadequate to meet the growth needs of northern communities'
- Lennard Morin, Mayor of Cumberland House

Every community presentation made it clear that, by not being able to more fully participate in development decisions affecting them, communities have less of a stake and therefore less commitment to new development than would otherwise be the case.

Northerners believe that local governments in the North have made rapid advances in the past few years. Local governments are now in a position to take far greater control of their communities' economic futures.

The perpetuation of processes which place Northerners 'on the outside looking in' will continue to foster northern resentment to development decisions. Almost every presenter felt that Northerners are most sensitive to the unique development needs of the North and are therefore in the best position to participate in or to lead decisions regarding the North's economic future. Northerners, as stakeholders in northern lands and resources, recognize the value of true partnership in decisions that affect them.

3. REVENUE SHARING

"Minatco recommends to the Northern Economic Development Task Force that consideration by the provincial government be given to allocating certain of the revenues from mining projects in Northern Saskatchewan to a Northern Development Fund"
- Ken Haapanen, Vice President, Minatco Ltd.

"Implement the Bayda recommendations on revenue sharing"
- Lennard Morin, Mayor of Cumberland.

"We need revenue sharing on mineral and renewable resource developments in the North to support economic development"
- Torance Tornquist, Manager, Northern Village of Sandy Bay.

The need for enhanced revenue sharing, to foster further economic growth in the North, was raised, loudly and clearly, at every public meeting of the Task Force. Although aware that mineral surface lease fees and other funds now accrue to the Northern Revenue Sharing Trust Account, Northerners do not have a say in how those funds are spent, and do not view such revenues as sufficient to support the necessary economic development activities that must take place.

Mining companies support a direct contribution of a portion of royalties, as well as lease fees, to a separate northern development fund. This would create a more direct link between current and future resource development in the North and benefits accruing to Northerners. Both Northerners and mining interests view such a direct link as a fuller expression of partnership in the development of the North's resources.

Northerners recognize that the financial support government provides to the North far outweighs the revenues generated from mining royalties, taxes and lease fees. However, they also recognize that most government expenditures perpetuate their dependence on welfare and are counter-productive to economic expansion. Northerners see the need for a direct and visible link between northern resource development revenues and support for further northern economic development.

Northerners frequently referred to the recommendations of the 1978 Bayda Commission and point, with much pride, to the success of the Northerner-controlled SaskPower Northern Enterprise Fund in helping to foster greater economic and business development in the North.

4. PARTNERSHIPS

"Northerners must have a say in what is happening"
- Nap Johnson, Ile-a-la-Crosse

"We should be working together - don't start another bureaucracy - make use of federal funding"
- Darryl Friesen, Manager, Beaver River Development Corporation, Meadow Lake

"We are not against economic development but there should be a consultation established between the people and the project developers"
- Ramona Nataweyes on behalf of her father Norman Nataweyes, Northern Village of Sandy Bay

"The development that takes place must be done in partnership - the municipalities, the companies, the people, the trappers, the fishermen and governments. I believe every new suggestion and every idea has to be respected by all people. If this happens I think we will move towards a very good lifestyle for the North"
- Frank Petit, Mayor of La Loche

Increased direct involvement of Northerners in policy formulation, program development and project delivery must complement existing and future federal and provincial activities to ensure maximum returns.

Northerners further point to the need for greater co-operation between federal and provincial offices to avoid duplication of efforts, to reduce the tape and to ensure that programs are not working at cross-purposes.

Time and again, Northerners expressed their desire that senior governments establish 'one stop shopping centres' that could provide the range of assistance they need to pursue economic development opportunities.

Northerners also expressed their desire to work more closely with the private sector, as early as possible in the planning process to maximize opportunities for employment, financial participation and business ventures resulting from major developments.

5. TRADITIONAL INDUSTRIES

"Last year I spent $6000 to start-up trapping and made only $3400"
- Pierre Robillard, Councillor, Black Lake

"Many fishermen buy trucks, ski-doos, equipment and supplies - if there is no fishing they will have nothing"
- John L. Montgrand, Mayor of Turnor Lake

"This is a critical area for our people, as it is not only connected to our historic and our current economy, it is also an integral part of our diet and culture"
- Clem Chartier on behalf of The Metis Society of Saskatchewan

"Trappers, fishermen and wild rice farmers require protection like that provided to the farmers in the south"
- Denise Natomagan, Administrator, Village of Pinehouse

"Trapping is legitimate as a way of life and as an expression of culture but it is no longer a way to make a living. Trapping has been abandoned by capitalism."
- Dennis B. McLeod, Mayor of Stanley Mission

At every public meeting, the Task Force's attention was drawn to the important role that traditional industries played in the development of the northern economy and continue to play in the preservation of the unique heritage, culture and traditions of the North.

While recognizing there are often strong competing interests for resources, notably fisheries, and that economic returns from both trapping and fishing are dwindling, Northerners are quick to defend such traditional industries for the money they generate to supplement already meagre incomes.

Northerners also reinforced the fact that there is a lack of viable employment or business alternatives for those people forced to leave traditional industries. As such, there are severe impacts on individual self-esteem, community life and the welfare system when trapping or fishing industries no longer support a once self- sufficient people.

Presenters called for government protection of industry participants from market downturns through economic assistance, resource development and enhancement programs, and assistance in formulating marketing strategies.

6. EXCESSIVE REGULATIONS AND RED TAPE

> ***"People often don't know or understand their housing contracts - they don't know if or when the houses will be paid for"***
> - Rod Bishop, Mayor of Green Lake

> ***"Government doesn't have the answers... people have the answers... just give them a chance to prove that. Micro-enterprises can be part of the answer. We need a `poor peoples' bank -- the ability to start with small business loans and less complicated procedures, rules and processes so that people gain confidence doing things themselves"***
> - Dennis B. McLeod, Mayor of Stanley Mission

> ***"The main obstacle that stops me from developing ideas is that there are no business support services to help me"***
> - Jim Bradfield, Northern Village of Sandy Bay

> ***"We are capable of delivering housing and with a much higher percentage of local input of labour and material than has been done in the past"***
> - Louis Bear, Mayor Northern Village of Sandy Bay

Concern was frequently raised to the Task Force that many Northerners do not have the administrative or financial expertise required to successfully access various financial support programs. Further, Northerners contend that many financing programs require a level of detailed application that is not necessarily appropriate for the type or value of proposal being made.

In several instances, reference was made to the Northern Revolving Loan Fund, specifically its apparent unwillingness to approve higher risk loans associated with entrepreneurial start-up, the lack of regional representation on its District Loans Committee, and applicant qualifying criteria that are perceived to be overly restrictive.

The Task Force was repeatedly told that municipal administrations, community development groups, as well as local and regional economic development corporations all try to assist local residents in accessing financial programs. However, more often than not, they do not have the time, staff or expertise to satisfy the demand.

Many municipal authorities also raised the problem of the excessive amount of time they feel compelled to spend helping residents to fill out all the paperwork required in respect of both C.M.H.C. and S.H.C. housing. A general feeling exists that greater local control over, and delivery of, housing programs could reduce the paper burden while, at the same time, providing significant employment.

7. PROGRAM AND BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY INFORMATION

> ***"Development funding mechanisms should be simplified and better co-ordinated than at present. The multitude of federal/provincial and other funding agencies and programs serves to frustrate many and confuse most people with initiatives"***
>
> - Mike Blackmon, Chairman, Beaver River Community Futures Corporation

> ***"The provincial government should give up a portion of its control over northern development ... we are ready, able and willing to share in the responsibility of diversifying and strengthening our provincial economy - we also hope that you have recognized the need to involve Northerners and northern local governments in this process"***
>
> - Northwest Saskatchewan Municipalities Association

Frequently, Northerners are frustrated with the lack of financial and business development assistance. However, it was also evident that proponents are frequently unaware of, or confused about, the many programs that exist. This basic lack of information was reinforced by other submissions calling for central locations through which information about business development and financial programs could be accessed, along with professional advisory assistance. They also called for increased involvement in the planning of new developments to ensure maximum awareness of opportunities.

8. INFRASTRUCTURE

"It is time the province recognized the efforts and accomplishments of Pinehouse and realized that if adequate infrastructure were in place, it would be possible for Pinehouse to grow in a positive direction"
- Greg Ross, Mayor of Pinehouse

"The La Loche Road is not only for the people of La Loche - it's for the people of the whole Northwest and also the Province of Saskatchewan. I think it would generate income for the people and the government"
- Frank Petit, Mayor of La Loche

"We need a health facility in the region to save the region, particularly with the closure of the Uranium City facility"
- Pierre Robillard, Councillor, Black Lake

"We need an all-weather road to open up the region to development, reduce costs and provide better services"
- Felix Paquette, Councillor, Fond du Lac

"The biggest issue is lack of facilities ... we need power in the North to ensure development"
- Darcy Morin, President, Young Entrepreneurs, Ile-a-la-Crosse

Many submissions spoke to the need to develop community infrastructure such as roads, health facilities, and power sources to attract business and investment and to ensure Northerners have access to basic services available to other Saskatchewan residents.

9. HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

> ***"Right now, we provide an economy for social workers, judges, police persons, guards, etc. Young people are risking death from drug and alcohol abuse and I think it's because they have nothing to lose. If they are not allowed to develop and organize, their violence turns inward on themselves and I suspect later it will come out as an explosion. Let's ensure it is a positive explosion."***
> - Ray Laliberte, S.N.A.C. Youth Director, Buffalo Narrows

> ***"Trained leaders are more likely to take courses of economic development, enter into business, and become contributors within an economic system"***
> - Kim Hendricks, Chairperson, Sandy Bay Boy and Girl Scouts

> ***"We need more business management training for youth if they are to take advantage of the opportunities created by economic development."***
> - Buckley Belanger, Mayor of Ile-a-la-Crosse

Many presenters identified the need for Northerners to be better prepared to take advantage of new development taking place in the North. If Northerners, either through a lack of appropriate training or opportunity, cannot participate in new developments, then progress in addressing the social problems of the North will be minimal or, indeed, non-existent.

While almost every presenter identified employment as a key to solving many of the pressing issues in the North, they also noted that appropriate training is prerequisite to achieving widespread participation in the northern economy.

10. METIS PEOPLE OF SASKATCHEWAN

"We want to work with the federal and provincial governments to develop Batoche as a Metis cultural and historical site and also as a tourism destination. We are not coming hat in hand - we will bring land, human and financial resources to the development"
- Murray Hamilton, Batoche Committee, Metis Society of Saskatchewan

"Currently 50% of our population is under the age of 24 and our growth rate is three times that of non-Aboriginal people. By the year 2000 -- one in five workforce entrants in Saskatchewan will be Aboriginal"
- Chris LaFontaine, Executive Director, Gabriel Dumont Institute

"Resource and business development alone cannot be expected to solve all of the problems we face today. We must also overcome social breakdown, lack of marketable job skills, low education levels, and other social problems which limit our ability to compete in the world market place"
- Max Morin, Northern Region 3, Area Director, Metis Society of Saskatchewan, Ile-a-la-Crosse

"From your hearings to date, it should be clear that our people need an economic base in order to establish self sufficiency. This economic base must be composed of a combination of financial and other resources"
- Clem Chartier, The Metis Society of Saskatchewan

Many presenters supported the need for the establishment of a Metis Heritage Trust Fund for the Metis people through which Metis human resource and economic development could be facilitated. While recognizing that generic northern development would contribute to Metis prosperity, the Task Force was reminded of the success of human resource development for Metis people by Metis people. Presenters also raised the need for the Metis people to influence and prepare themselves for the opportunities presented by economic growth.

Several presenters raised constitutional and Metis land questions along with the need for a Metis Commissioner to address these and other issues of fundamental importance to the Metis people. Although beyond the mandate of the Task Force to make specific recommendations in respect of these issues we believe they should be actively pursued by government and the Metis Society of Saskatchewan.

In several presentations, Batoche and the need for the creation of an historical and cultural centre for Metis people was raised as a priority. Presenters made it clear that such a development would not only support Metis cultural development but would also potentially contribute to a regional tourism strategy now being developed. As was the case with all presenters, those representing Batoche reinforced their desire to substantively contribute to such a program and called for a partnership with the federal and provincial governments in its development.

Recommendations

The Task Force endorses the following principles as being prerequisites to economic and human resource growth within the North:

- Northern people must play an integral role in making economic development decisions which affect them.
- Northern people must be given the structures through which they can enhance and diversify the northern economy in a manner that reflects their needs and aspirations.
- Northern people must participate in, and visibly and tangibly benefit from, northern development.
- Northern people must be allowed to develop their human resource potential to take advantage of the wide range of available economic opportunities.
- Northern people must work in partnership with all levels of government and the private sector to realize the opportunities before them.
- Northern people must be provided with the necessary infrastructure to facilitate expansion and diversify the economy.
- Northern people, their history and their culture, must not be sacrificed in the name of economic development.

This listing of prerequisites has led the Task Force to make the following recommendations. These recommendations represent a bold new way to get things done, ways which allow Northerners to play integral roles in development and to take pride and ownership in decisions that affect their future.

1 SUPPORT FOR REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1.1 The Task Force recommends the government place an immediate priority on the appointment of an interim Northern Planning Committee, with majority representation by Northerners, to develop a mandate, structure and operating framework for a Northern Economic Development Board. It is envisioned that this Board, on establishment, would have, as its principal function, responsibility for developing recommendations and policies associated with regional economic development and for management of the Northern Revenue Sharing Trust Account (N.R.S.T.A.)

1.2 The Task Force recommends that the current N.R.S.T.A. capital pool and approximate $2.8 million base annual revenues continue to be dedicated to the delivery and renewal of 5-year municipal capital and operating grant programs.

1.3 The Task Force recommends that a portion of royalties from new non-renewable resource developments in the North be allocated to the N.R.S.T.A. for economic development.

1.4 In reflection of key messages from Northerners and on careful evaluation, the Task Force suggests that future revenues accruing to the N.R.S.T.A., over and above those necessary to support adequate municipal capital and operating grant programs, be dedicated by the Northern Economic Development Board for the following uses:

- providing leverage to access federal/provincial funding programs
- enabling Northerners to take equity positions in business and commercial ventures
- providing economic development plans and business proposals, and/or attainment of professional expertise
- providing operating support to local and regional economic development associations
- providing education and skills enhancement directly focused on economic activity (leadership and board training, entrepreneurial training, management training, etc.)
- providing operating support to local Resource Co-Management Boards

1.5 The Task Force recommends that government provide immediate interim funding to the Northeast Municipalities Association, Northeast Economic Development Association, the La Ronge-Air Ronge Community Economic Development Committee, the Creighton-Denare Beach Economic Development Committee and the Northwest Saskatchewan Municipalities Association Forestry Company to pursue regional economic development opportunities.

2 NEW LAND OWNERSHIP & CO-MANAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

2.1 In recognition of the need to stabilize and support traditional industries in the North, especially given the difficult times they face, the Task Force recommends that Government immediately offer for sale main trappers' and fishermen's cabin sites, at a cost equal to one year's lease fee plus any arrears and survey fees. The Task Force further recommends that governments and the interested parties investigate means to minimize survey costs and ensure full awareness of the responsibilities and rights associated with land ownership.

2.2 The Task Force recommends that individual Northerners, and local/regional development corporations, be eligible to purchase Development Options, for up to a three-year term. These Development Options would make Crown Land available, at preferred rates, to give Northerners an opportunity to prepare development plans and arrange necessary financing for business and commercial projects.

2.3 The Task Force recommends that government and interested northern communities enter into Resource Co-Management Agreements and establish Resource Co-Management Boards. These Agreements would enable government and Northerners, as equal partners, to jointly plan and manage land and resource uses and allocations within development areas centred on northern communities.

2.4 The Task Force further recommends that the first Resource Co-Management Agreement be established as soon as possible with Pinehouse, in direct response to its request. This pilot project would allow the partners to refine working details of the model so it can be implemented more widely throughout the North.

3 METIS CULTURAL & HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

3.1 The Task Force recommends that a Metis Heritage Trust Fund be established and dedicated to human resource development to provide Metis people with the business and entrepreneurial knowledge and skills necessary to actively participate in the provincial economy. The document submitted by the Metis Soceity of Saskatchewan to government entitled Building A Future - The Next 25 Years could be used to initiate discussions for the Trust Fund referred to above.

3.2 In recognition of the need to support continued expansion of accredited training and education opportunities for Metis people, the Task Force recommends the provincial government facilitate the Federation of the Gabriel Dumont Institute with the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Sciences and Technology.

3.3 In particular recognition of Metis culture, heritage and significant contributions to Saskatchewan history, the Task Force recommends that a five-year capital program be established by government and managed by the Batoche Committee of the Metis Society of Saskatchewan. Funds are to be used to support capital construction of a cultural, recreational and tourism centre on Metis land in Batoche. The Task Force further recommends that costs for the centre be equally shared amongst the Metis Society of Saskatchewan, the Government of Saskatchewan, and the Government of Canada.

3.4 The Task Force recommends that $10,000 be provided to the Metis Society of Saskatchewan for construction of a roof and floor at the traditional Metis meeting site located in the Palmbere Campgrounds, near Turnor Lake.

4 IMPROVING ACCESS TO FINANCIAL SERVICES

During Task Force hearings, Northerners frequently spoke of difficulties they had accessing funds from the Northern Revolving Loan Fund (N.R.L.F.) to support legitimate, worthwhile projects. Often, such projects had the apparent support of other government agencies and/or northern industry, but support from the N.R.L.F. could not be obtained or could only be obtained through extreme efforts.

Although the Task Force appreciates and supports the need for the N.R.L.F. to maintain some rigour in its operations, there is a need for increased flexibility to support the riskier development efforts of entrepreneurs and business development corporations in the North. Therefore:

4.1 The Task Force recommends that future appointments of members to the District Loans Committee of the Northern Revolving Loan Fund reflect the principle of equitable regional representation.

4.2 The Task Force also recommends that the Northern Revolving Loan Fund review lending criteria and policies with a view to assuming an increased level of risk.

4.3 The Task Force strongly encourages the Northern Revolving Loan Fund to reflect within its general operating practices and lending decisions:

- a reduced emphasis on pre-1982 operating records and client files, in favour of a greater focus on recent economic circumstances and performance of applicants.
- increased support to first-time borrowers and new business developers.
- increased co-operation, co-ordination and information sharing among lending and business development agencies.
- increased attempts at the regional level to find workable solutions to problems.

5 FACILITATING LOCAL DELIVERY OF LOCAL PRIORITIES

5.1 The Task Force recommends that, whenever possible, government should extend development opportunities associated with government capital construction to northern communities to enhance the development of northern expertise and business management skills.

5.2 The Task Force recommends that Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and Saskatchewan Housing Corporation (Community Services) work with northern communities to resolve long-standing issues related to the Rural and Native Housing Program.

Additionally, the Task Force recommends that the federal and provincial governments, together with northern communities, work towards increasing local business and employment opportunities in the delivery, construction, administration and management of new and existing housing units.

5.3 Excessive development costs, unnecessary delays, bureaucratic red tape, and a confusing array of unco-ordinated federal and provincial programs and services tend to thwart local energies, initiatives, and attempts to operate independently.

The Task Force recommends that federal and provincial governments better co-ordinate their efforts to support the priorities of northern communities and northern entrepreneurs.

Both federal and provincial governments should consider using modern technology to provide information about current services and programs at the community level.

5.4 The Task Force recommends that the Saskatchewan Liquor Board co-operate with the Northern Village of La Loche to establish a new liquor outlet in a more appropriate location. It is further recommended that the Board turn over the current building to the community for use as a child care or pre-kindergarten facility.

6 IMPROVING NORTHERN INFRASTRUCTURE

6.1 In recognition of the shared jurisdiction and responsibilities amongst the various levels of government, the Task Force encourages the federal and provincial governments, in conjunction with the Northern Economic Development Board, to establish joint agreements to address infrastructural needs and issues (eg. basic water and sewer systems, airports, roads, district heating systems and bridges).

6.2 The Task Force recommends that federal and provincial governments co-operate with local bands, communities and regional development interests to negotiate a multi-year cost-sharing agreement to construct an all-weather road to the Athabasca Region. Spin-off employment benefits and business opportunities associated with the construction of the road should accrue to northerners.

6.3 The Task Force further recommends that the provincial government commit the multi-year funding necessary to allow the Village of La Loche, in partnership with SIAST, Education, Highways and Transportation, Indian and Metis Affairs Secretariat and Social Services to complete the La Loche-Fort McMurray road to the Alberta border.

6.4 The Task Force also recommends that Highways and Transportation and Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (Woodlands Campus) work with the band and hamlet of Turnor Lake and provincial and federal funding agencies to arrange a training and employment program for upgrading the Turnor Lake Road.

6.5 To ensure the continued availability of high standard health care in the North, the Task Force recommends the provincial government immediately finalize decisions with respect to northern health care facilities.

6.6 The Task Force recognizes that a strong link exists between economic development and the availability of power and other sources of energy at reasonable rates. Therefore the Task Force strongly encourages SaskPower and SaskEnergy to continue working in partnership with Northerners to ensure adequate energy supplies for future community and regional development.

7 SUPPORTING TRADITIONAL INDUSTRIES

7.1 The Task Force recognizes the important historical, cultural, and economic role traditional industries play in the North and recommends that government:

- continue to provide financial support for the commercial fishing sector.
- take further steps to open up new markets for Northern products through foreign trade offices.
- support the diversification of the commercial fishing industry through the identification of market opportunities, new product development and the development of a marketing strategy particularly for rough fish.
- allow the harvesting of firewood for personal use within specified areas without the need for a permit.
- undertake market research and development, in conjunction with industry organizations, into the potential for trapline tourism, snowmobile adventures, wilderness survival programs and other opportunities for diversifying traditional pursuits.

8 FOLLOW UP

8.1 The Task Force recommends that it be reconvened in April, 1992 to review and report to government and Northeners on the progress made in implementing these recommendations.

Appendix - List of Presenters

ORAL PRESENTATIONS

John Woodward, Chairman
Northern Settlement of Bear Creek
Bear Creek

John Montgrand, Mayor
Northern Hamlet of Turnor Lake
Turnor Lake

Frank Petit, Mayor
Northern Village of La Loche
La Loche

Darlene Laprise
Northern Settlement of Garson Lake
Garson Lake

Roy Cheecham, Executive Director
Northwest Saskatchewan Municipalities Association
La Loche

Antoinette Lemaigre
NorSask Native Outreach
La Loche

Doug Gailey, Village Administrator
Northern Village of La Loche
La Loche

Dennis Shatilla, Mayor
Northern Village of Buffalo Narrows
Buffalo Narrows

Philip Chartier, Treasurer
Metis Society of Saskatchewan
Buffalo Narrows

Louis Morin, Sr., President
Northern Fur Conservation Area Trappers' Association
Turnor Lake

Darcy Morin, President
Young Entrepreneur
Ile-a-la-Crosse

Geoffrey Morin
Ile-a-la-Crosse

Jules Daigneault
Ile-a-la-Crosse

Ambrose Maurice
Jans Bay

Jim Laliberte, Metis Local #5 Board Member
Metis Society of Saskatchewan
Green Lake

Rod Bishop, Mayor
Northern Village of Green Lake
Green Lake

Edward Kennedy, Sr.
Green Lake Wood Enterprises
Green Lake

Mervin Sayese, Agri-Land Committee
Green Lake Land Development Corporation
Green Lake

Pat Auckland, Acting Chairperson
Northern Hamlet of Sled Lake
Sled Lake

Dave Laliberte
Green Lake

Ray Moskowec, Administrator
Northern Village of Green Lake
Green Lake

Guy Bouvier, Western Region 1 Area Director
Metis Society of Saskatchewan
Meadow Lake

Darryl Friesen, Manager
Beaver River Business Development Centre
Meadow Lake

Gordon Wallace
Air Sask Aviation Ltd.
La Ronge

Jim Christian, Pilot
NorSask Aviation
La Ronge

Jeanne La Voie, Proprietor
Inn on the Lake, Beauval

Fred Shwaga, Mayor
Northern Village of Denare Beach
Denare Beach

Barbara Morin
Cumberland House

Edwin Mercredi, Vice Chairman
Northern Settlement of Stony Rapids
Stony Rapids

Pierre Robillard, Councillor
Black Lake Band
Black Lake

Magloire MacDonald, Councillor
Northern Settlement of Stony Rapids
Stony Rapids

Robert Augier
Uranium City

Felix Pacquette, Councillor
Fond du Lac Band
Fond du Lac

Kim Hendricks
Sandy Bay Scouts' and Guides' Association
Sandy Bay

Linda McKay
NorSask Native Outreach
Sandy Bay

Torance Tornquist, Manager
Northern Village of Sandy Bay
Sandy Bay

Bruce Ray
Sandy Bay

Yvonne Smith, Senior Counsellor
Outpatients Centre
Sandy Bay

Conrad Bear, Alderman
Northern Village of Sandy Bay
Sandy Bay

Victor Morin
Sandy Bay Churchill Ventures
Sandy Bay

Louis Bear, Mayor
Northern Village of Sandy Bay
Sandy Bay

Tom Merasty, Alderman
Northern Village of Sandy Bay
Sandy Bay

Gail Anson, Instructor
Youth Entrepreneur Program
Sandy Bay

Roy McKay
Sandy Bay

Leon McCallum, President
Keewatin Construction
Buffalo Narrows

Glen Bouvier, Manager
Ile-a-la-Crosse Development Corporation
Ile-a-la-Crosse

Max J. Morin, Northern Region 3 Area Director
Metis Society of Saskatchewan
Ile-a-la-Crosse

Ray Funk, Member of Parliament
Prince Albert-Churchill River
Prince Albert

William Caisse, Deputy Mayor
Northern Village of Ile-a-la-Crosse
Ile-a-la-Crosse

Brian Ratt
Ile-a-la-Crosse

Norman Johnson
Ile-a-la-Crosse

Nap Johnson
Ile-a-la-Crosse

Armand Murray
La Loche

Buckley Belanger, Mayor
Northern Village of Ile-a-la-Crosse
Ile-a-la-Crosse

Denise Dodds, Marketing Co-ordinator
North West Tourism Development Group
Meadow Lake

Greg Ross, Mayor
Northern Village of Pinehouse
Pinehouse

Glen McCallum, Councillor
Northern Village of Pinehouse
Pinehouse

Laura Boyd, President
Magloire Kiddy Care Centre
Pinehouse

Linda Fleth, Manager
Pinehouse Communications Society
Pinehouse

Thomas Sanderson
Pinehouse

Lena Sanderson, Co-ordinator
Home Care Services
Pinehouse

Peter Smith, Recreation Director
Pinehouse

Gary Tinker
Gary Tinker Foundation
Pinehouse

Nap Sanderson
Pinehouse

Evelyn McKay
Red's Camp
La Ronge

Ron McKay
Red's Camp
La Ronge

J.V. Dantouzie, Councillor
Black Lake Band
Black Lake

Bruce Joa, Chairman
Creighton-Denare Beach Economic Development Committee, Creighton

Catherine Hynes, Economic Development Officer Creighton-Denare Beach
Economic Development Committee
Creighton

Debbie Patience, Councillor
Town of Creighton
Creighton

Wayne Elliot
Cross-Overland Country Lodge
Denare Beach

Gordon Moore, Mayor
Town of Creighton
Creighton

Winston McKay, Eastern Region 1 Area Director
Metis Society of Saskatchewan
Cumberland House

Al Pettigrew, Director
Operations Support Services, Cameco
Saskatoon

Bobby McAuley
Cumberland House

Lennard Morin, Mayor
Northern Village of Cumberland House
Cumberland House

Ramona Nataweyes
Sandy Bay

Neil Laliberte
Sandy Bay

Tim Bradfield
Sandy Bay

Pierre Fern, Councillor
Fond du Lac Band
Fond du Lac

Fred Tralnberg
Stony Rapids

Herb Frederickson, Senior Engineer
Midwest Joint Venture
Saskatoon

Ray Duret, Personnel Superintendent
Cigar Lake Mining Corporation
Saskatoon

Al Morash, Manager - Protection
Minatco Ltd.
Saskatoon

Clem Chartier
Metis Society of Saskatchewan
Saskatoon

Chris La Fontaine, Executive Director
Gabriel Dumont Institute
Regina

Murray Hamilton, Maria Campbell and Claude Petit, Batoche Committee
Saskatoon

WRITTEN PRESENTATIONS AND BRIEFS

Notice of Council Motion supporting a post cutting operation in Bear Creek;
Kelly Montgrand, Turnor Lake

Request for fish plant and ice-making machine;
Turnor Lake Fishermen's Co-op, Turnor Lake

Request for financial support for arena renovations and for a roof over Palmbere meeting place;
John L. Montgrand, Mayor, Turnor Lake

Request for support to upgrade Turnor Lake Road (Highway #909);
Northern Hamlet of Turnor Lake and Turnor Lake Band, Turnor Lake

Request for improvement in electrical services;
Settlements of Garson Lake and Descharme Lake

Speech notes; February 19, 1991, Ile-a-la-Crosse;
Max Morin, Ile-a-la-Crosse

Livestock operation proposal, February 22, 1991;
Ambrose Maurice, Jans Bay

Presentation to the Northern Economic Task Force, February 20, 1991 - Green Lake;
Rod Bishop, Mayor, Green Lake

Presentation to the Northern Economic Task Force, February 20, 1991 - Green Lake;
Edward Kennedy, Green Lake Wood Enterprises, Green Lake

Proposal to the Northern Economic Development Task Force;
Greg Ross, Mayor Pinehouse

Presentation to the Northern Economic Task Force, February 20, 1991 - Green Lake;
Mervin Sayese, Green Lake Land Development Corporation, Green Lake

Submission to the Northern Economic Development Task Force, February, 1991;
Ken Haapanen, Vice-President, Mining, Minatco Ltd., Saskatoon

Submission to the Northern Economic Development Task Force, February 22, 1991, La Ronge;
Ben Siemens, Executive Director, SaskPower Northern Enterprise Fund, Saskatoon

Presentation to the Nothern Economic Development Task Force;
Nap Gardiner, Executive Director, Missinipe Broadcasting Corporation, La Ronge

Presentation to the Northern Economic Development Task Force, February 22, 1991, La Ronge;
Robert J. Mercredi, Northern Region 1 Area Director for La Ronge Metis Local, Stanley Mission Metis Local, Weyakwin Metis Local, and Timber Bay Metis Local

Brief to the Northern Economic Development Task Force;
Winston McKay, Eastern Region 1 Area Director, Metis Society of Saskatchewan, Cumberland House

A Saskatchewan Native Addictions Council Chemical Dependency Traning Program Initiative;
Winston McKay, Chairman, Saskatchewan Native Addictions Council, Cumberland House

Presentation to the Northern Economic Development Task Force;
Gordon Moore, Mayor, Creighton

Regional Economic Development Core Funding Request;
Northeast Economic Development Association, La Ronge/Air Ronge Community Development Corporation and Creighton-Denare Beach Economic Development Committee

A Position Paper on Study Assistance and the Metis and Non-Status Indian Students of Saskatchewan for discussion by the Gabriel Dumont Institute Board, 1990;
Chris La Fontaine, Executive Director, Gabriel Dumont Institute

Canada Job Strategy Executive Summary and Proposal for Severely Employment Disadvantaged; Plato Computer Based Training, Meadow Lake, 1991;
Guy Tourend, Program Co-ordinator, Northwest Friendship Centre, Meadow Lake

A Review of the Under-Utilized Fish Resource in Central Canada, December, 1990; prepared for The Metis National Council

Commercial Fishing Program Proposal;
Richard McKay, La Ronge Brief;
Ray Moskowec, Village Administrator, Green Lake

Brief;
Guy Bouvier, Area Director, Western Region 1, Metis Society of Saskatchewan

Submission to the Northern Economic Development Task Force, February 19, 1991;
Mike Blackmon, Chairman, Beaver River Community Futures Committee, Beauval

Proposal for a one-stop business development centre; Beaver River Community Futures Community Economic Development Plan, May, 1989;
Darryl Friesen, General Manager, Beaver River Business Development Corporation, Meadow Lake

Recovery Lake proposal;
Glen McCallum, Pinehouse

Magloire Kiddie Kare Presentation;
Laura Boyd, Pinehouse

Presentation to Northern Economic Development Task Force, February 22, 1991;
Thomas Sanderson, Pinehouse

The Welfare of our People (Home Care Services) Brief;
Lena Sanderson, Home Care Co-ordinator, Pinehouse

Community Recreation Brief;
Peter Smith, Recreation Director, Pinehouse

Brief presented by Pat Aukland;
February 20, 1991 on behalf of John Fonos, Chairman, Sled Lake

Regional Economic Development Administrative Assistance Funding Request;
Bruce Joa, Chairperson, Creighton-Denare Beach Economic Development Committee, Creighton

Submission to the Northern Economic Development Task Force;
Norman Nataweyes, Sandy Bay

Director's Report for February;
Yvonne Smith, Director, Outpatient Centre, Sandy Bay

Presentation to the Northern Economic Development Task Force, February 25, 1991, Sandy Bay;
Tim Bradfield

Brief;
Cornelius Ballantyne, Mayor, Deschambault Lake

Presentation to the Northern Economic Development Task Force;
Torrance Tornquist, Manager, Northern Village of Sandy Bay

Canadian Aboriginal Economic Development Strategy - Aboriginal Economic Initiatives for the 1990's;
Marcel L'Heureux, Canadian Aboriginal Economic Development Strategy (CAEDS), Saskatoon

Northern Economic Development Strategy N.W.S.M.A. - Proposal to the Northern Economic Task;
presented by Roy Cheecham, Executive Director and Doug Gailey, N.W.S.M.A.

Presentation to the Northern Economic Development Task Force by the Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research Institute, February 28, 1991;
Chris La Fontaine, Executive Director, Gabriel Dumont Institute

Brief to the Northern Economic Development Task Force, February 28, 1991; presented by Clem Chartier for the Metis Society of Saskatchewan

Proposal for Northern Enterprise Centre;
G. Eric Pederson, Director, Entrepreneurship, Northlands College, La Ronge

Proposal for a northern office for business development funding;
Lawrence Daigneault, Ile-a-la-Crosse

Metis Land, Batoche, Batoche 1991 Supplemental Plan, prepared for the Metis Society of Saskatchewan and the Metis National Council By the Batoche Committee, February 12, 1991